

A

REVIEW

OF THE

Affairs of FRANCE:

Purg'd from the Errors and Partiality of *News-Writers*
and *Petty-Statefmen*, of all Sides.

Saturday, June 17. 1704.

THe conclusion of the last, referr'd us to examine what a Condition our Colonies and Plantations would have been in, according to common Conjecture, in Case the *French* had been what We pretend to be, viz. *Masters of the Sea*.

'Tis hard to say all that would have happen'd; but these few Consequences will, I presume, be granted us.

1. A General Interruption of Commerce, with all its Circumstances and Concomitants — God knows, 'tis but *so so*, that our Trade is maintain'd as it is; Ships are detain'd, Convoys backward, abundance run the risque without Convoy, and fall into the Enemies hands; the dearth of our Sugars, and all the several Commodities which are the Growth of our Colonies, are a Demonstration of the Interruption of our Commerce; and if the *French* were Masters at Sea, 'tis easier to guess how it would be with us, than 'twould be to support the Charge of it: If we lose abundance of our Ships now, we should have none come safe then; if we pay a great price for our Sugars now, we should have none then for our Money, unless we bought them of our Enemies. In short, if the *French* were Masters at Sea,

as we should have no Trade to the Plantations, so we should have no Plantations to Trade to, in a few Years; for they would not be such ill Husbands of the Advantage as we are.

2. The Interruption of Commerce in our *West Indies*, would infallibly starve our Plantations. The *Terra Firma* would be ruin'd for want of Trade, and the Islands for want of Food; one would be starv'd for want of a Market for their Corn, and the other for want of Corn for their Market.

Our Colonies depend upon one another, as the Belly and the Members; the Islands are supply'd with all manner of Provisions, as Wheat, Pease, Beans, Beer, Fish, Pork, Beef, and Live Cattle from the Main Land, viz. *New England*, *New York*, &c. as the first cannot subsist without these Provisions, so the last cannot subsist as to Trade, without the Market for the Value they receive from the Islands, in return for their Provisions, which is in Sugar, Mellasses, Rum, and Pieces of Eight, is the Profit of all their Plantations; pays the Planters Rent and Labour, and remits to *England* by the Merchant, in Payment for the Manufacture sent them from hence.

All the returns *New England*, *New York*,

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&c. could make of their own Growth, to *Europe*, and which would sell here, would hardly pay for the Women's Topknots we send them; their Beaver Trade is quite fail'd, the Quantity there, nor the Price here, bearing any Proportion to what it us'd to be; the rest of the Furs are inconsiderable and low Priz'd. There is indeed a Trade in Timber, Hemp, Flax, Pitch, Tarr, Copper, &c. which might in time be rais'd to a vast Magnitude, to the Infinite Advantage both of those Colonies in Particular, and to *England* in General; but as I never expect to see us take a step so much in our own Favour, so unless this Paper bare a Title of a *Review of the Affairs of England*, instead of *France*, I cannot satisfy my self to launch out into such a Digression, tho' 'tis a Mortification to me to refrain it.

I remember in the beginning of this Undertaking, the vast Prospect I had before me, prompted me to say, That Life was more likely to be wanting to finish the Subject, than Subject wanting to supply the Paper; this some took for the Author's Vanity, and I have been more than once reprov'd for it; but since I have put out to Sea, and sail'd to the *West Indies*, what with our own Colonies, the *Spaniards American* Settlement, and the *French*, I find my self in such a Throng of Subjects, that I begin to Question when I shall get back again.

This present Subject is what our Condition would be, as to our Colonies and Plantations in the *West Indies*, if the *French* were Masters at Sea?

'Tis needless to tell how we must watch Opportunities to slip away with our Ships, and skulk from Island to Island; how our small Squadrons must run the risque of falling in with their great Fleets, and not one Ship in five come safe; how our Trade must all come North about, and the hazards of those Seas make us run ten times the risque, and our Voyages be twice as long as before; these are the smallest part of the Consequences if the *French* were Masters of the Sea, and pursued the Advantages of it, with the same Diligence they use to do, in other Cases; all our Island Colonys must fall into their hands, Bar-

badoes must Capitulate for Bread, and Article to be brought home to *England*.

That little Island could no more feed 100000 Mouths, which by a general Computation is less than the Number that now subsist there, without a Communication of Trade with the Continent, than *London* or *Paris* without the influx of Trade from the neighbouring Country. The Negroes would devour them; and like a Town besieg'd they must Surrender at Discretion; the Safety and Prosperity of all our Plantations, without question, depends upon the Mastership of the Sea, which we must maintain.

But the natural Inference from hence is, that if it be true, That on the *French* being Masters of the Sea, all our Island Colonies would fall into their Hands; since we then are Masters at Sea, and have been so for several Years, why have not the Colonies of the *French*, in like manner, fallen into our Hands? Why have we not Ruin'd their Plantations, Interrupted their Commerce, Defeated their little Squadrons, Intercepted the Convoys of their Provisions, and taken their Ships?

Let those Gentlemen answer the Question whose proper Business it has been to direct Affairs in those Parts; the Part of this Paper shall always be to Observe, but never to Reflect.

But this Consequence will be Natural from the Premises, viz. That 'tis apparent from hence, that we do not make the same Use of our Advantage as the Enemy does, and as indeed We ought.

'Twas the Character of *Hannibal*, That he knew how to Conquer, but not how to Subdue; he knew how to fight a Battle, and gain a glorious Victory, but not how to make the just Improvement of his Advantages when they were obtain'd; and this was a just Charge upon him in the Case of the Battle of *Cannæ*; He had Routed the *Roman* Army, Slain their Consuls, and 80000 *Romans* in the Field. Had he March'd his Victorious Troops directly to *Rome*, he had ended the War, and the *Roman* Commonwealth, both at a blow; but trifling the Time away, after that he never came at the like Opportunity; and the Omission was the Destruction of his own Country,

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by the same Power which he had neglected to suppress.

In like manner, Had the Naval Force of these United Nations been Employ'd, ever since the Victory at *La Bogue*, to the Destruction of the Enemies Strength in *America*, and elsewhere on the Coasts of *France*; Had we made use of the Advantages of our Superiority at Sea, to the Destruction of the Commerce between the *Spaniards* and the *French* in *America*: Had Expeditions well contriv'd, and Orders wisely enough given, been faithfully and vigorously Executed, I may say without offence, it must have been impossible for the *Spaniards* to have maintained themselves on the Continent, but our Privateers from *Jamaica* would have Ruined them, and Enrich'd themselves by constant Depredations.

Had our Advantages been pursued, their Islands must have fallen into our Hands, the Colonies at *Martinico*, *Guadalupe* and *St. Christophers*, must have run the Fate of *Port a Paix*, and one have been Destroy'd as well the other; and nothing but the same Scandal that lay on the Victorious *Hannibal* can be said to it; That we know better how to Fight for, and the *French* how to Manage a Victory.

For with all our Mastership of the Sea, the *French* even among our own Colonies take our Ships, Interrupt our Trade, and Enrich themselves with the Spoil of the Plantations.

I could go on with the melancholy Account, and Describe the Condition our Islands are often in, the miserable Loss of our Men in Expeditions to those Parts.

'Tis an unhappy Truth, which this Paper has no Concern in, That in several Expeditions to our Plantations in *America*, such Mortality has seized our Men, that the

Voyage it self has been sufficient to destroy our Forces, without so much as attempting the Design they went upon.

Let others take upon them the Ungraceful and Dangerous Office of Enquiring into, and Satyrizing upon the Reasons and Causes of these Defects; 'tis not to our Purpose, whether they proceed immediately from Heaven, as a Judgment on our Undertaking, which some People (ill Natur'd enough) pretend to, or whether from ill Conduct, want of necessary Care of, and needful Provisions for the Men, I shall not examine; but this I must note, that in the Squadrons sent to those Countries from *France*, we are assured they have never suffered in Proportion to us.

Not but that the Coasts of *America*, in the bottom of the Bay of *Mexico*, whither those Ships have gone, was always accounted equally unhealthy, if not more than any of our Islands.

But there are certainly some Reasons, which we are not yet arriv'd to a knowledge of; there is something in it, which we are not in a way to come at; whole Regiments would not dye like rotten Sheep with no deficient Conduct; it is not so with other Nations, it has not always been so with ours.

Wherever the Reason of this lies, there lie the Reasons why we have not made the same use of our Advantages at Sea, that other Nations would have done, and that in Reason might have been expected from us; and they that know these Reasons, would do their Country good Service to discover them.

The Reader is desired to correct the following Error in our last; viz. Pag. 1. Col. 1. after Leucates, add Salies, and; and continue the Paragraph.

ADVICE from the Scandalous C.L.U.B.

THE Society has been very busy, since our last, on publick Affairs; An imaginary Envoy from the Cardinal Primate of *Poland*, presented a sort of a Memorial to them; wherein he desired some Missionaries might be sent him from *England*, to instruct him in the Protestant

Religion, that Prelate having some Desire of quitting his Habit, as he has done his Loyalty to his Prince.

The Society took the Case into Consideration, and being very willing to shake hands with the Corporation, *de Propaganda fide*, had it under Debate, when an unlucky

lucky Question happen'd to be put to the Gentleman that made the Motion, *Viz.*

Why he came so far as *England* for Ecclesiastical Directions, rather than to the Protestants of *Germany*, *Swedeland*, and those Countries which lay nearer hand?

He told them his Master had heard much of some Clergy-Men among the *English* Protestants, who had a kind of Religion that made it out to be Orthodox, for a Man to take up Arms against his King, and yet maintain the Doctrine of Passive Obedience inviolable at the same time; that could swear to one King and pray for another; and a Thousand such pretty Religious Knacks, which at present might be very useful for him in the farther Designs he had against his Master, the King of *Poland*: And that therefore, if he did change his Religion, and turn Protestant, he was resolv'd to be such a Protestant as That, *it suited so exactly his present Occasion.*

The Society finding themselves a little too much banter'd, told the Gentleman, they thought he wanted Manners as much as his Master wanted Loyalty; and he might inform his Master, that we had too many such Converts as he, among the Protestants already; and that he, who after he had sworn Allegiance to his Prince, could Confederate both against him and his Native Country; nay even continue where he is, as to Religion; for that we Covet in *England* no such Protestants.

Another Grave Gentleman put a Question to the Society upon the same Article, of the Affairs of *Poland*.

The Pope having granted a Jubilee, and full Remission to all such Catholics, as shall in such and such a manner, pray for the Prosperity of their King; and the Cardinal refusing to Publish or admit it to be Publish'd in *Poland*: He desired to know who is Pope in *Poland*, St. Peter's Successor, or the Cardinal Primate?

The Society thought fit to Answer this Gentleman's Question, with a Another, *viz.* Why does not the Pope Excommunicate him for his Contumacy?

And then pass their Judgment on the Question, That 'tis their Opinion, the Cardinal is no more Catholic in his Religion, than Honest in his Politicks.

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